

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments are made to place the claims in the preferred U.S. format and to remove multiple claim dependencies.

Respectfully submitted,

BURNS, DOANE, SWECKER & MATHIS, L.L.P.

By: William C. Rowland
William C. Rowland
Registration No. 30,8888

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1404
(703) 836-6620

Date: January 7, 2002

2020105566T001

Application No. Unassigned
 Attorney's Docket No. 000515-280
 Page 1

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated January 7, 2002

Marked-up Claims -

1. (Amended) A material laminate for use as a covering sheet for an absorbent article [articles such as a sanitary napkin, an incontinence protector or a diaper] with [a planar extension,] a length direction, a width direction and a thickness direction and exhibiting a central axis extending in the length direction and two opposing side edges [(9,10)] extending in the length direction and comprising, in the thickness direction, a first fluid pervious material layer [(2)] and a second fluid pervious porous material layer wherein at least one of the material layers comprises a thermoplastic material and wherein the two material layers are mutually connected by bond sites in the material laminate [(1)] within which bond sites the thermoplastic material has been caused to at least partially soften or melt and thereby bond the two material layers together, and wherein the material laminate [(1), in the planar extension, further exhibits] includes two side portions [(5,6)] extending in the length direction and each extending a distance in the [transverse] width direction from a respective one of the side edges [edge (9,10)] towards the longitudinal central axis of the material laminate [(1)] and a central portion [(4)] positioned between the side portions [(5,6)] in the [planar extension] width extension of the material laminate [(1)] wherein the first material layer [(2)] and the second material layer [(3)] in the central portion [(4)] of the material laminate are intermittently bonded together in a first bond pattern [(7)] and the first material layer [(2)] and the second material layer [(3)] in the two side portions [(5,6)] of the material laminate are intermittently bonded together in a second bond pattern [(8), characterized in that] wherein the first fluid pervious material layer [(2)]

10019955-010702

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated January 7, 2002

Marked-up Claims -

is a fibrous layer arranged so that an outside surface of the material laminate is fibrous and [in that] the percentage of bonded area in relation to the total area in the two side portions [(5,6)] is greater then the percentage of bonded area in relation to the total area of the central portion [(4)].

2. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the central portion is at least 0.5% less than the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the side portions.

3. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the central portion is between 3% and 6% and the proportion of bonded area in relation to the total area in the side portions is between 5% and 8%.

4. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with [one of claims 1-3] claim 1, wherein each bond site exhibits a smallest extension and a second extension which is perpendicular to the smallest extension, [characterized in that] wherein at least the smallest extension in the bond sites of the first bond pattern is less than 0.8 millimetres.

10019955-010702

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated January 7, 2002

Marked-up Claims -

5. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with claim 4,
[characterized in that] wherein the smallest extension in the first bond pattern is 0.3
millimetres or less.
6. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with [one of claims 1-3]
claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the bond sites comprise spot-bonds.
7. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with [one of the preceding
claims] claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the first material layer is a hydrophobic
nonwoven material.
8. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with [one of the preceding
claims] claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the second bond pattern is denser than the
first bond pattern.
9. (Amended) A material laminate in accordance with [one of the preceding
claims] claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein the material laminate is in the form of a
coherent, continuous web and that the central portion [(4)] and the side portions [(5,6)]
extend continuously in the length direction of the continuous web.

20019955-010702

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated January 7, 2002

Marked-up Claims -

10. (Amended) An absorbent article exhibiting a substantially elongated shape with [a planar extension,] a length direction, a width direction and a thickness direction and exhibiting a central axis extending in the length direction and two opposing side edges [(308,309; 408,409)] extending in the length direction and comprising a fluid pervious covering sheet [(301; 401)], a fluid impervious covering sheet [(313; 413)] and an absorption body [(315; 415)] enclosed between the two covering sheets [(301,313; 401,413)], and wherein the absorbent article[, in the planar extension,] exhibits two side portions [(305,306; 405,406)] extending in the length direction and each extending in the width [transverse] direction from a respective one of the side edges [edge (308,309; 408,409)] a distance towards the longitudinal central axis of the article and a central portion [(304; 404)] positioned between the side portions [(305,306; 405,406)] in the [planar extension] width direction of the article, [characterized in that] wherein the fluid pervious covering sheet [(301; 401)] comprises a material laminate [(1)] in accordance with [one of claims 1-9] claim 1, wherein the material laminate [(1)], in the central portion of the article exhibits the first bond pattern and the material laminate in the side portions of the absorbent article exhibits the second bond pattern.

1001955-010702

Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated January 7, 2002

Marked-up Claims -

11. (Amended) An absorbent article in accordance with claim 10,
[characterized in that] wherein the length extension of the side portions [(305,306;
405,406)] in the width direction of the article is at least 4 millimetres along all of the
length of the each side portion.

10019955-010702